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INDONESIAN COMMUNIST PARTY'S EXPLANATION
OF MADIUN INCIDENT OF SEPTEMBER 1948

[Comment: This report gives the Communist explanation of the Madiun incident of September 1948, written by Miradsi and published in the Bintang Merah, official publication of the PKI (Partai Komunis Indonesia, Indonesian Communist Party).

Miradsi's explanation termed the incident the "Madiun Provocation," and said that it was the climax of a series of incidents planned by Indonesian reactionaries and imperialists to provoke the PKI and its allied organizations to an armed clash. The explanation, giving much detail from the PKI viewpoint, on the events leading up to the Madiun incident, follows:

"Bintang Merah" Introduction

The Madiun provocation began on 19 September 1948. This provocation was the climax of imperialist attempts to destroy the Indonesian Democratic Republic, and the beginning of a national tragedy. Yet, it also gave courage and solidarity to an oppressed people in their fight against the white terror.

The patriots who fell victims to the Madiun provocation did not hesitate to fight on the side of the people and the friends of the party. They implemented the revolutionary teaching that when revolt against reactionary oppression begins, Communists must not waver, despite unfavorable signs, but must take the side of the majority of the people.

Climax of Series of Imperialist - Inspired Provocations

To understand that the Madiun provocation was the climax of a series of provocations, the forces which played a part in the Indonesian revolution and in the Madiun provocation must be studied.

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The Indonesian revolution of August 1945 was staged by revolutionary groups which, due to their weakness and lack of understanding, were infiltrated from the start by pro-Dutch and pro-Japanese elements. From the beginning of this revolution, there were open and sometimes secret clashes between the revolutionaries and these Dutch and Japanese agents. When these clashes became more frequent and could no longer be concealed, the imperialist countries began to intervene more actively in Indonesian affairs, especially after the secret meeting of Dr Sukiman [of Indonesia] and Graham from the Three Nations Commission [of the UN].

On 23 January 1948, cooperation between domestic and foreign reactionaries succeeded in causing the democratic cabinet of the late Amir Sjarifuddin to collapse. With the fall of this cabinet and the formation of the Hatta Cabinet, which preferred secret diplomacy and negotiated confidentially with van Mook, the reactionaries gained in their attempt to stem the tide toward a People's Democracy and the influence of the Communists. The participation of foreigners in the politics of the Indonesian Republic sharpened the domestic clashes and dragged the republic closer to the politics of the imperialist countries.

Among the demonstrations which Indonesians staged against these activities were those of 100,000 people in Madiun, 75,000 in Magetan, 50,000 in Ngawi, and 50,000 in Ponorogo.

The action of the people in rejecting the Hatta Cabinet because of exclusion of the FDR (Front Demokrasi Rakjat, People's Democratic Front), was ignored. The government then took steps to forbid demonstrations without government permit, introduced censorship, forbade labor offices to consider data from other than government sources, and otherwise violated democratic rights. All these measures were enforced without their having been passed by the Dewan Perwakilan Rakjat (People's Representative Council).

In mid-February 1948, the Hatta Cabinet issued a rationalization and reconstruction plan for the armed forces which actually aimed at the following:

1. Removal of revolutionary and progressive elements from the military, an important step in making the army into a loyal instrument for the suppression of the people's movement.
2. Placement of as many antidemocratic officers as possible in the leadership of the armed forces, especially officers acceptable to the Dutch. This was an important move to facilitate military negotiations with the Dutch and to absorb en masse the federal (colonial) army into the armed forces of the United States of Indonesia.

Implementation of "Red-Drive Proposals"

Imperialist circles were still not satisfied with the policy of rationalization and reconstruction, because they considered it too slow. Therefore, they quickly adopted the rude tactics previously used in Europe, China, Burma, India, and other places, of directly meddling in the internal affairs of Indonesia.

On 21 July 1948, a conference was arranged at Sarangan attended by representatives of the Three-Nations Commission, with Sukarno, Hatta, Natsir, Sukiman, Moh. Rum, and Sukanto as hosts. It was usual for the Hatta Cabinet to negotiate with foreign representatives in secret. Instances of this were the secret Hatta-van Mook and Hatta-Stikker meetings. The secret Sarangan conference gave birth to an evil agreement called the "Red-Drive Proposals." As has already been seen, the term "Red" is not only given to Communists, but to all anti-imperialist elements.

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The "Red-Drive Proposals" were carried out by various kinds of provocations. Every unpleasant incident in Indonesia was attributed to the FDR or to the PKI. As a provocation, the army forcibly occupied the offices of Pesindo (Pemuda Sosialis Indonesia, Indonesian Socialist Youth Movement), the Partai Sosialis (Socialist Party), and Sarbupri (Sarekat Buruh Perkebunan Republik Indonesia, Trade Union of Indonesian Estate Workers) in Sragen, Ngandjuk, and Tulungagung. The strike at Delanggu, demanding a slight improvement in the living conditions of the workers, was brutally suppressed by the use of arms. A mobile brigade unit under the leadership of Asmaun, a Partai Sosialis member in Bodjonegoro, was disarmed, and Asmaun was transferred to Jogjakarta. The government sent R. Sukanto, chief of the Indonesian police, to the US.

In Djakarta, R. Sumarto, deputy chief of police of the Republic of Indonesia, informed the Dutch that there would be a mopping-up operation against the red elements in the interior of the republic and that the Dutch should not be alarmed by any clash in that area. For the mopping-up operation, the police sought the aid of General Sudirman, who refused the request. Sudirman proposed that the operations should not be directed solely against leftists, but should be of a general character. Rumors of the operation were increased by Sultan Buwono, who stated at a meeting that a mopping-up operation against Red elements was to be carried out, and that, if necessary, a general clean-up would be ordered as a radical measure.

The trade unions were divided among the Serekat Buruh Islam Indonesia (Indonesian Moslem Workers Union), the Serekat Buruh Nasional (National Trade Union), the Serekat Buruh Merdeka (Independent Trade Union), and the Serekat Buruh Merah Putih (Red and White Trade Union). The regional Dewan Pimpinan Pemuda (Council of Youth Leadership) was purposely confused by the formation of the Gerakan Membangun (Construction Movement) and the Patuh Rakjat (People's Guard) which were financed by the government and led by civil service employees. Both the Gerakan Membangun and the Patuh Rakjat are faithful copies of the New Life Movement of the Japanese occupation era.

These provocative and counterrevolutionary actions by the government were universally opposed. In East Java, 20,000 youths demonstrated against the rationalization and reconstruction plan which was based on the unjust Presidential Decree No 13. On National Awakening Day, 20 May 1948, 5,000 soldiers of the 4th Division of the Panembahan Senopati Unit in Surakarta staged a demonstration rejecting the plan. The government did not heed the soldier's demonstration and stubbornly continued its counterrevolutionary tactics.

On the night of 3 July 1948, Colonel Sutarto, Commandant of the 4th Division, who was loved by all his troops, was murdered in a cowardly manner by a shot in the back. Sutarto was a revolutionary. During the Dutch period, he was a member of Suluh Pemuda Indonesia (Indonesian Youth Torch), and during the Japanese occupation became Shodantyo Peta Daidan [an officer in the Japanese-sponsored Indonesian army] at Wonogiri, and took an active part in the underground movement against the Japanese. With the proclamation of Indonesian independence, he organized the Angkatan Muda Tentara (Young Army Forces), which later became the 4th Division. Sutarto was a loyal member of the people's democratic movement, and a great sympathizer of the PKI. During the first Dutch police action, he personally led his troops on the Semarang front.

The murder of Colonel Sutarto cannot be separated from the reactionary efforts to remove democratic elements from the army under the cloak of rationalization. This was merely rationalization in a different form. Although the murderer was caught, no investigations were made, and he was released by

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the Attorney General with the explanation that, legally, he could not be prosecuted. The most vicious and evil thing of all was that it was then rumored about that Sutarto's murderer was, himself, a member of the FDR. However, the people did not believe this lie, which was an evil, imperialist tactic.

On 5 August 1948, Dr Murwardi, who belonged to the Barisan Banteng (Banteng Troops) and the GRR in Surakarta, was called on by President Sukarno to report on the FDR, especially concerning its strength. The dollars from the US Consultation Bureau [sic] in Bangkok began circulating and it was stated that Dr Murwardi received 3 million Indonesia Republican rupiahs to stage a military incident to give the government an excuse to remove those persons who genuinely loved national freedom.

Government Merdeka Operation in Surakarta

On 1 September 1948, the government started its "merdeka" operation in Surakarta under the leadership of: Lieutenant Colonel Wagiman, ex-communications chief of the 4th Division; Alip Hartojo, a former Barisan Pelopor Republik Indonesia (Indonesia Republic Storm Troops) investigator who had become a government investigator; Major Akil, head investigator of the Siliwangi Division; Major Lukas from the Siliwangi Battalion; and Major Achmadi from the KRU (not identified) City Defense Battalion.

The "merdeka" action was started in Surakarta with the kidnaping of Slamet Widjaja and Pardio, both members of the Surakarta PKI. Slamet Widjaja was secretary of the Surakarta FDR. It was said that the kidnaping was done by unruly groups. However, it became apparent that the groups were not very unruly when Widjaja and Pardio were put in the government concentration camp in Jogjakarta.

On 7 September 1948, the 4th Division Commandant, Lieutenant Colonel Suadi, assigned Major Asmara Sugeng, Captain Sutarto, Captain Suprpto, Captain Supardi, and Captain Suradi to investigate these kidnapings, but all five officers failed to return. Only their bicycles were found in Brambatan, at the Lukas Company Headquarters of the Siliwangi Division. On 8 September 1948, Lieutenant Colonel Suharman of the TNI, also assigned to investigate the kidnapings, disappeared. On 9 September, it was revealed that Suharman had been taken to the Siliwangi headquarters at Tasikmadu and imprisoned together with Widjaja and Pardio. On 19 September, the three prisoners were transferred to Staff I of the Siliwangi Division at Kletjo; and, on 24 September, they were transferred to the Wirogunan jail in Jogjakarta.

It was even rumored that the five officers were murdered after being kidnaped. Lieutenant Colonel Suadi went to Jogjakarta for an explanation of the government's attitude, but the central government pretended to know nothing of the situation.

On 9 September, General Sudirman gave Lieutenant Colonel Suadi permission to take action against the unrest in Surakarta. On the strength of this, on 10 September, an ultimatum was issued to the Siliwangi Battalion.

The Surakarta sector commandant Major Slamet Rijadi with one company and help from two ALRI battalions, circulated the ultimatum demanding that if the five prisoners were not released by 1800 hours on 13 September, an attack would be started. There was no answer to the ultimatum and, at the stated time, a clash ensued between the Siliwangi troops, known at that time as the Hatta government's favorites, and the 4th Division and an ALRI battalion. The ALRI battalion commander, Sutarno, fell at the start of the engagement. The fight continued with bitterness until 1800 hours of the same day, when General Sudirman ordered a cease-fire. This cease-fire order had been jointly agreed

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upon by General Sudirman, the Defense Minister, someone from the military court, Resident Sudiro, and others. The cease-fire was honored by the Panembahan Senopati Division but the Siliwangi Division commandant quietly ordered all Siliwangi troops around Surakarta to move into the city and occupy it.

At 1800 hours on 15 September, when it had become clear that the Siliwangi troops had not honored the cease-fire order, the Panembahan Senopati and ALRI troops moved to attack the Siliwangi Division. The violation of the cease-fire order by the Siliwangi troops was held by the government to be in order, while Suadi and all his troops were branded as the troublemakers. The government announced this by radio and leaflets, urging the people to help the Siliwangi troops who were following government orders.

On 16 September, Pesindo headquarters on Djalan Singasaren was attacked by Siliwangi troops, using the disguise of the Barisan Panteng. Mopping-up operations and execution without due process of the law were the order of the day. The Surakarta territory became a battleground.

The situation became dangerous and aroused other TNI units outside Surakarta, which were sympathetic to the Panembahan Senopati Division. However, Comrades Musso and Amir who were on tour at the time of the Grambatan incident explaining the plans for merging the PKI, the Partai Sosialis, and the FBI (Partai Buruh Indonesia, Indonesian Labor Party). When asked their opinions by army officers at Tjepu, urged that the military incident be localized to Surakarta.

Therefore, it is clear from the above that the Madiun provocation was actually the culmination of repeated provocations by the imperialist forces which were aimed at the destruction of the forces of the anti-imperialistic national revolution. It was only by such provocation that the Round-Table Conference Agreement could function smoothly. The value of such incidents to the imperialist forces can be seen by the fact that immediately after the Madiun provocation, the Netherlands government, after consulting with US Secretary Marshall, offered the aid of the Netherlands Army to the Sukarno-Hatta government.

Incidents Leading up to Madiun Provocation

In August 1948, the PKI, under the leadership of Comrade Musso, made important corrections in PKI policies and organization. These corrections were combined into a resolution called the Djalan Baru untuk Republik Indonesia (New Road for the Republic of Indonesia). The efforts of every PKI member were then focused on the merger of the PKI with the Partai Sosialis and the FBI. All three parties were based on the same foundations of Marxism-Leninism, and worked together with the FDR. This merger was to have been effected in October 1948. The merger and the correction of PKI policy were much feared by the reactionaries who were looking for ways of destroying this revolutionary strength.

Such units as the Siliwangi units and the Mobile Police Brigade of Mohammed Jasin were used to destroy the revolutionary movement in Madiun. Robberies were purposely staged in the Madiun area by provocateurs under the name of the SR (Serikat Rakyat, United People) or the PKI. Provocateurs systematically infiltrated the people's organizations, and whenever a robbery took place, the local PKI or SR leadership was immediately arrested and mistreated, later to be released because of lack of evidence.

It is also no longer a secret that the military governor, Gatot Subroto, asked Premier Hatta to authorize him to take action against Sumarsono, an FDR leader in Madiun and Chairman of the Executive Body of the Badan Kongres Pemuda Republik Indonesia (Indonesian Youth Congress Organization). There were no reasons accompanying this action.

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The situation became more tense when troops of the Siliwangi Division and the Mobile Police Brigade sent arrogant patrols marching through the streets of Madiun to frighten the people. The sugar mills in the Madiun area were occupied by Siliwangi troops who staged drills without notifying the population or other TNI troops in the area. This activity, which almost resulted in a fight between Brigade 29 and Siliwangi troops, was the usual way that Siliwangi troops provoked an incident. Sugar factory workers were often beaten up without reason. A railroad worker was shot dead and workers of the Madiun City Corporation, who were organized in Sebda (Serikat Buruh Daerah Autonom, Union of Employees of the Autonomous Area) were beaten for no apparent reason.

Protesting these cruelties, the city corporation workers, and later Sebda, under the leadership of Sobsi, went on strike. The workers won the strike and the Mobile Police Brigade asked for forgiveness.

These minor incidents increased until finally, on 18 September, the Mobile Police Brigade and the Siliwangi Brigade were disarmed. There was comparatively no resistance to this action, but on 19 September, several small military incidents occurred as a result of the government's making distinctions between one group of TNI troops and another in giving guarantees and authority. These small incidents later flared into the great tragedy [of the Madiun provocation]. Therefore, this is proof that the Madiun incident was not incited by the PKI and that it absolutely was not an attempted coup d'etat, as was falsely alleged by domestic and foreign reactionaries.

Refutation of Charges in Sukarno's Speech, 19 September 1948

The people and soldiers who had been consistently anti-imperialist were finally forced to defend themselves as a result of President Sukarno's speech on the night of 19 September 1948. In his speech, the president ordered a general armed attack, and the arrest and brutal slaughter of those branded troublemakers. The defense was strengthened by the organization of the people's forces and the formation of a national front government for the Madiun territory, which was later joined by other territories in East and Central Java.

In his speech of 19 September, President Sukarno quoted a fabricated FDR program. The FDR propaganda plans for the regional secretaries were always sent through the Jogjakarta post office and therefore the government knew of them very early. There was absolutely no secrecy about them. If it were true that the FDR program was the one that was quoted by Sukarno, the Justice Department should have taken steps earlier, and the police should have acted against the FDR. An added proof of FDR innocence was the fact that the falsity of the program was published in several newspapers by the FDR secretariat, and the central FDR secretariat also notified the police about the matter long before the Madiun provocation. Yet the police did nothing. In Surakarta, the FDR secretariat complained to the police about the publication of the false program in the Surakarta daily Murba. Yet, the police did nothing to punish the falsifiers there.

Based on the President's Secret Order No 1, Year 1948, arrests and cruel killings were carried out. This was illegal, because Sukarno was not the prime minister, and according to the Constitution, he had no right to order arrests. Therefore, it is clear who was the actual troublemaker.

To have made Sukarno's action legal, it would have been necessary to have definite proof that at the specific time of these accusations, the night of 19 September 1948, a Soviet government had been set up in Madiun.

The unreasonableness of this can be seen in the following disarmament announcement which was made immediately.

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The disarmament resulted from the demands for the fulfillment of the national program and Articles 27, 28, and 33 of the Indonesian Constitution. An uprising was not being staged to overthrow the government. Recognition of Mr Sukarno as president and Dr Mohammed Hatta as vice-president would continue. Recognition of the Red and White flag as the national flag would continue. Recognition of "Indonesia Raya" as the national anthem would continue.

In addition, a telegram was sent to the President, the Prime Minister, and the Minister of Home Affairs. This telegram, signed by Sumantri as Territorial Commandant, and Sudharto and Supardi as representatives of the territorial government, read as follows: "In Madiun, the Siliwangi and Mobile Brigade Battalion was disbanded by Brigade Unit 29, because of the absence of the mayor due to illness. We are temporarily in charge of the territorial government. Order has been restored. Awaiting further instructions. Report follows."

This telegram proves that the territorial government of Madiun did not want to secede from the central government and was not a Soviet government, but a government of the Madiun territory and a part of the Republic of Indonesia.

Brigade Commandant Suharto, who visited Madiun 3 days after the disarmament, stated that the city had returned to normal. To prove this to the Jogjakarta government, he brought letters from government offices in Madiun confirming the fact. Comrade Musso gave the following message orally to Commandant Suharto, to be relayed to the government in Jogjakarta:

"The fighting between ourselves has been halted. The two sides have reunited and are fighting the Dutch imperialists. We and our men are prepared to be at the front of the attack. The Hatta Cabinet should be formed into a national front cabinet. The national program for 1948, which was agreed upon by 40 organizations, should be made the program of the government."

All of Comrade Musso's proposals were bluntly rejected by the government in Jogjakarta and the prosecutions and killings continued.

The President's speech of 19 September contained a plea to exterminate genuine ideas of freedom by mass slaughter and forced such patriots as Musso, Jusuf Bakri, Suripno, Harjono, Dr Wioreno, S. Karna, Bondan Supodo, Sudjoko, Marton-sukarjo, Sjamsudin Musanif, Hadjit, Sidik Arselan, and many others to defend themselves and their ideas.

Eulogy of Comrade Musso

This was how the Madiun provocation erupted, and this was how the accusations were thrown at Comrade Musso, who was branded a "troublemaker." The reactionaries wished to smirch the greatness of Comrade Musso and name him the instigator of an abortive coup d'etat. Musso's greatness and the people's love for him made these people jealous to the point where they smeared his name and attempted to murder him. Yet the evil accusations did not ring true for honest people who saw Musso's attempts to avoid conflict.

After returning from abroad, Comrade Musso, as a true son of Indonesia, had consistently attempted to strengthen the position of the Republic of Indonesia. This was proven by the Suara Ibu Kota of 14 August 1948, which stated that when the Indonesian people proclaimed their independence, Labor Leader Musso, who was still in Moscow, patriotically published the independence proclamation in the USSR capital. At that time, said the paper, the Soviet people showed great sympathy for Indonesia. From the first, Musso and the Soviet people did not believe Dutch accusations that the Republic was Japanese inspired. This was due to the fact that the revolution was then clearly anti-imperialistic.

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Another proof that Musso did not plan a revolution against the Republic of Indonesia while he was abroad was seen by his negotiation, as Suripno's representative, with Silin, the USSR Ambassador Prague, at the beginning of November 1947, to negotiate for the recognition of Indonesian independence by the USSR. Similar negotiations were also carried on with representatives of the People's Democracies of Eastern Europe. Musso's conviction was that recognition by the USSR would be beneficial, because, as a land of workers, the USSR was necessarily anti-imperialistic. Therefore, the USSR had no other interest in Indonesia than to help in its anti-imperialistic struggle.

After Musso returned to Indonesia, President Sukarno asked him to help strengthen the country and to aid the revolution. Comrade Musso replied, "That is a duty. I have come here to bring order." According to the 14 August 1948 issue of *Suara Ibu Kota*, speaking of the strikes which were taking place at that time, Comrade Musso said "At present, when the attack of the reaction against Indonesia is growing stronger, everything must be considered from the standpoint of unity. Strikes must be prevented by removing unsatisfactory labor conditions. Labor problems must be solved peacefully because any unrest within the country can be exploited by the enemy."

Speaking of the sharpness of intraparty conflict, Comrade Musso stated that this was due to the many leaders in Indonesia, including Communists, who did not really know their obligations in the revolution. To eliminate this strife, Comrade Musso wrote articles entitled, "The Nature of Our Revolution," "Self-Criticism Within the National Revolution," "Proposals for a National Front," "Change the Present Cabinet to a National Front Cabinet," "Proposals for a Compromise Must Be Rejected," and others which can be read in the brochure, "Five Weeks Before the Madiun Affair," compiled by S. P. Derita.

Before the Madiun provocation, Comrade Musso had often made such statements as, "We must not do anything which might result in government action against us. Within the next few months, we must concentrate our attention on the improvement of the organization and program of the party. Specifically, we must call a party congress and form a national front to guarantee victory of the Indonesian national revolution."

Comrade Musso carried out FDR policies. The reactionary government, however, forced him to fight until his death against terror. Comrade Musso, the author of the historical *Djalan Baru*, fought imperialism and the enemies of the people without mercy. With the death of Comrade Musso, Indonesia lost a great and genuine patriot.

Failure of the Madiun Provocation

The specter of the Madiun provocation is now used by the Indonesian government to frighten the people. It is being used as the reason to increase the police force to 20,000 men and to increase the number of TNI soldiers in support of this force. The government also intends to frame emergency laws to quell uprisings. The government shrewdly cries, "Remember the cruelty of the Madiun Affair," so that the people will forget the cruelties that exist now.

However, the people have become more alert and understand the real significance of the Madiun provocation and other provocations conceived by the reactionaries. The valuable lessons learned from the Madiun provocation have resulted in the growth of the people's spirit of resistance to the reactionaries. The people have learned how to develop their revolutionary strength.

At the time of the Madiun provocation, the following was evident to the people: The PKI's policies were correct and were aimed directly at the heart of imperialism. The PKI's program uprooted the foundations of feudalism by giving land to poor farmers.

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Sobsi and the Territorial National Front Government [the temporary Communist-inspired local government] had formed labor councils in every labor service branch to supplement the service branch head. At a student meeting in Madiun, it had been resolved that students from the elementary grades to high school would not have to pay tuition. The territorial National Front Government, immediately upon its inception, had distributed the following amounts of food: 1,500 tons to the workers; 1,500 tons for the people's defense; 1,500 tons to the people of Ngawi Regency; 1,500 tons to the people of Ponorogo Regency; and 1,500 tons to the people of Madiun Regency.

The plans called for the distribution of such things as coffee, kerosene, and coconut oil to be started as soon as possible, but these plans were not carried out due to the attacks of 30 September 1948.

All the actions of the national front government were recognized as good and just by the oppressed people because, since the revolution of 1945, they had not tasted real freedom such as that experienced under the national front government.

The experience of the Madiun provocation gave rise to new energy, new alertness, and new orientation.

In the 1951 observation of 19 September, it is requested that all of us continue the spirit of the united national front and remain at our posts in the fight to resist the danger of fascism and defend democracy. As was said in the PKI Central Committee statement of 6 February 1951, "the success of the provocation plan of the Sukarno-Hatta government resulted in the division of the national anti-imperialist union, which was being built up by the PKI, based on a national program which had been approved by all parties and people's organizations. The destruction of the anti-imperialist national revolutionary strength was brought about, among other things, by the killing and arrest of 36,000 people who were the backbone of the revolution. These incidents aided the Dutch attacks during the second police action, and the Sukarno-Hatta government's policy of capitulation to the Dutch.

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